

# Inside CFSA...

*FAQs & Facts FAX*

*For Our Child-Serving Community*

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July 23, 2002

Volume 1, Number 7

## District, Maryland, and Prince George's County Reach Agreement on Foster Children

On June 27, District of Columbia, Maryland, and Prince George's County (MD) signed an interim agreement that allows the District to continue placing foster children in Maryland while ensuring their safety. The agreement is also a significant step toward broad-based cooperation in serving children across borders in the Washington metropolitan area.

Currently, the District has approximately 1,500 children in foster and relative homes in Maryland, primarily in Prince George's County. Signing the new interim agreement were Olivia A. Golden, Director, D.C. Child and Family Services Agency; Emelda P. Johnson, Secretary, Maryland Department of Human Resources; and Donna F. Crocker, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services, Prince George's County.

Among major provisions, the agreement:

- Allows the District to expedite placement of children with family members in Maryland by using the same basic safety precautions required by Maryland law.
- Allows the District to make emergency placements in licensed Maryland foster homes after exhausting its own list of foster homes. All jurisdictions agreed not to disrupt current placements, unless children were experiencing a risk to their safety and well-being.
- Requires the District to validate and maintain current information on the status and placement of District children in care in Maryland.
- Will attempt to improve availability of foster homes for all children through a pilot project based on a "no denial due to jurisdiction" policy and through joint recruiting of foster parents.
- Calls for increased sharing of information, such as abuse and neglect reports, between the District and Maryland.
- Calls for a metropolitan approach to include Virginia for providing services to children requiring out-of-home care.
- Provides for the District to fund two staff positions to assist with placement of District children in Prince George's County, MD.
- Allows Prince George's County to submit a proposal to the District identifying fiscal and resource implications of District placements on a range of County government services.

Maryland and the District will jointly monitor this agreement and will involve Virginia in future discussions.

### Teen Program Recognizes Foster Teens for Achievements

CFSA's Keys for Life program held a recognition ceremony this past weekend to acknowledge foster teens for their achievements on Saturday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn Capitol located at 550 – C Street, SW, Washington, DC. CFSA youth and distinguished foster parents joined Olivia Golden, CFSA Director, Elaine Overton, Deputy Director for Programs and Paul Vanhoozer, Program Manager for this very special luncheon.

The afternoon was an inspirational occasion featuring foster teens and peers that had triumphed through stages of young adulthood and independence. Teen mistress of ceremony Ramia Heard set the tone for the event followed shortly by Dominic Reeves, a recent Hampton University graduate who gave words of inspiration, and the highlight of the afternoon featured dynamic keynote speaker Shane Salter. Mr. Salter, a nationally recognized advocate for foster children, grew up in the foster care system in New York City. He currently serves as Chief of Staff for the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders here in Washington, DC.

The Keys for Life Program is federally funded through the Chafee Foster Care Independence program and provides services to youth ages 16 to 21 to promote self-determination, responsibility, preparedness for independence and positive production in society. Ultimately, the program's goal is to help each teen acquire skills necessary to become self-supporting. This program includes life skills, vocational training, college preparation and counseling to mention a few.